

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 1004

By Faison

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend the employees of the Division of Forestry in Cocke County for their heroism in responding to the Halls Top forest fire.

WHEREAS, our nation was conceived by individuals who were willing to sacrifice their personal safety and concerns to ensure our individual and collective freedom, and the Volunteer State is especially proud to be the home of so many valiant men and women who have performed above and beyond the call of duty; and

WHEREAS, thousands of Tennesseans continue this time-honored tradition of public service as firefighters and first responders, facing the rigors of corporal imperilment in protecting those whom they so selflessly serve; and

WHEREAS, the Division of Forestry in Cocke County is one such outstanding group of public servants, who answered the call to duty on Monday, April 4, 2016, when a forest fire was reported near the Cosby community; and

WHEREAS, what was soon to be known as the Halls Top forest fire had spread from a half-acre to 100 acres within thirty minutes. As the wind fanned the flames, within two hours the inferno was burning across 1,000 acres, and, by Tuesday morning, the fire was threatening the Cherokee National Forest; and

WHEREAS, the fastest-spreading forest fire experienced area firefighters had ever seen, officials called in every volunteer fire department in Cocke County, the Cocke County Emergency Management Agency, the Tennessee Department of Agriculture's Division of Forestry, and hotshots from the U.S. Forestry Service in North Carolina and Virginia to battle the blaze; and

WHEREAS, despite the danger, the employees of the Division of Forestry in Cocke County responded courageously and efficiently in accordance with their training, and they

battled the Halls Top forest fire for nearly a week, as it ravaged more than 2,400 acres until it was finally extinguished; and

WHEREAS, the employees of the Division of Forestry in Cocke County performed their duties with the utmost skill, dedication, and professionalism, and their service can only be categorized as outstanding; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we hereby honor and commend the employees of the Division of Forestry in Cocke County for their heroism in responding to the Halls Top forest fire. We recognize them as paragons of virtue, efficiency, and professionalism and wish them all the best in their future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.